



2012- 2013 Indiana AmeriCorps*State Request For Proposals

Issued September 9, 2011



OFFICE OF FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

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September 9, 2011

Dear Potential AmeriCorps*State Applicants,

The Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI) and the Indiana Commission on Community Service and Volunteerism (ICCSV) promote service volunteerism throughout our state and in 2011 administered more than \$3.9 million in AmeriCorps funding. We are dedicated to addressing the critical national issues of strengthening education, preparing for and responding to disasters, expanding health services, assisting veterans and military families, building environmental stewardship, and fostering economic opportunity. This year, more than 800 Hoosiers will, as AmeriCorps members, strive to address these areas of need within Indiana's urban and rural communities. AmeriCorps members get amazing things done and make a significant difference in the lives of so many Hoosiers.

We are proud to announce our Request for Proposals (RFP) for the 2012-2013 program year. This RFP includes instructions for AmeriCorps*State funds for new and recomplete organizations.

For the 2012-2013 program year, the ICCSV will consider applications for new and recomplete AmeriCorps programs proposing either a cost-reimbursement or a fixed-amount grant. We encourage you to choose the option that best meets your organization's needs.

Please read all instructions and materials carefully. In order to increase your understanding of AmeriCorps*State, OFBCI has prepared several additional training materials which are available on our website. We encourage you to visit <http://www.in.gov/ofbci/2347.htm> for more information.

All applicants must submit a Notice of Intent to Apply to OFBCI no later than 5:00 P.M. (Eastern Time) on Friday, September 30, 2011. All final applications must be received by our office no later than 5:00 P.M. (Eastern Time) on Tuesday, November 1, 2011. Additional details are outlined below.

The ICCSV is committed to providing the most current information available to all applicants. We will rely primarily upon our website, <http://www.in.gov/ofbci/>, to keep applicants informed of any changes. Please check our website frequently. We want to provide you with all of the resources and technical assistance you need to develop an extraordinary application. Best of luck to you.

Sincerely,



James F. Huston
Executive Director

Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

*Indiana enjoys a rich tradition of Hoosiers working together for the common good. In that spirit, the mission of the OFBCI is to **CONNECT** organizations and communities to grants, services, and each other; **PROMOTE** volunteerism and service to improve the lives of Hoosiers; **ENCOURAGE** public and private resources to seed and sustain innovative and high quality community and faith-based initiatives; and, **HIGHLIGHT** the good works of individuals and their communities with best practices and innovative models.*

In January 2005, Governor Mitch Daniels created the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI) to ensure that the faith-based institutions of Indiana were provided equal access to state and federal resources and services. Together the OFBCI, with assistance from Indiana Commission on Community Service and Volunteerism (ICCSV; see below), provides information, training, technical assistance and limited grant funding to both community based and faith-based organizations seeking to make Indiana a better place to live for all citizens. For more information about the OFBCI, please visit our website at www.ofbci.in.gov.

Overview of AmeriCorps

All across America, AmeriCorps members are *getting things done* for their communities. AmeriCorps, which is often referred to as the domestic Peace Corps, engages citizens of all ages in projects ranging from tutoring, youth mentoring, veterans' assistance, housing rehabilitation, health care, environmental issues, and disaster relief. It gives communities and neighborhoods valuable human resources for addressing their most pressing civic issues and gives the individual a way to serve his/her country by reaching out to others within his/her own or another community. Since 1994, more than 637,000 men and women have provided more than 774 million hours of service to their communities and country through AmeriCorps. This service has allowed members to increase their skills and earn money for college that otherwise would not have been available to them. This year alone, \$1,212,219 in Educational Awards will be distributed to Indiana AmeriCorps members.

AmeriCorps programs provide grants to initiate, improve, or expand the ability of organizations and communities to provide services that address local unmet environmental, educational, public safety (including disaster preparedness and response), or other human needs. AmeriCorps awards member positions and program operating funds to public and private nonprofit organizations with goals which are in accord with this mission. Grants support organizations that use volunteer service as a strategy for addressing national and community needs, while fostering an ethic of civic responsibility and connecting Americans of all ages and backgrounds with opportunities to serve their communities and country. Please see the Corporation's statutes and regulations for more information about AmeriCorps at www.americorps.gov.

The Indiana Commission on Community Service and Volunteerism

The Indiana Commission on Community Service and Volunteerism (ICCSV) is the governor-appointed administrative agent of the Indiana AmeriCorps*State programs for the Corporation for National and Community Service. Supported by the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, the ICCSV is dedicated to uniting individuals in service to their communities and achieving demonstrable results by addressing Indiana's critical issues of strengthening education,

preparing for and responding to disasters, expanding health services, assisting veterans and military families, building environmental stewardship, and fostering economic opportunity.

The ICCSV's goals are to:

Encourage Indiana's strong ethic of civic responsibility and rich tradition of community involvement;

Ensure a serious role for service and volunteerism in meeting Indiana's educational, environmental, health, public safety, and homeland security challenges;

Connect Hoosiers from diverse backgrounds and experiences to find solutions to problems together; and,

Nurture the growth and emergence of Indiana's next generation of community and professional leaders.

To meet these goals, the ICCSV selects and administers AmeriCorps grants under the provisions of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1990. In Indiana, more than 800 AmeriCorps members provide approximately 550,000 hours of annual service under the sponsorship of public-private partnerships to meet critical state needs. The ICCSV, through the OFBCI, provides AmeriCorps programs with extensive training and ongoing technical assistance to support the development of high quality AmeriCorps programs. Each program works closely with a national service program officer at the OFBCI to ensure progress towards program objectives, a meaningful service experience for AmeriCorps members, and compliance with applicable regulations. For more information about the ICCSV, please visit our website at <http://www.in.gov/ofbci/2353.htm>.

Applicant Eligibility

New Applicants. The ICCSV encourages the development of innovative programs operated by partnerships new to the AmeriCorps family and in communities that have not previously utilized AmeriCorps resources. New applicants are defined as those in which the partnership has not previously operated an AmeriCorps*State program or has not operated a program in more than five years. Public or private nonprofit organizations, including labor organizations; faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; government entities within Indiana (e.g., cities, counties); Indian Tribes; or partnership or consortia are eligible. Intermediaries are encouraged to apply.

Existing ICCSV AmeriCorps*State Programs. Current ICCSV programs must apply via two different processes. Existing programs who are finishing their third year of a grant award cycle must submit a new application. These programs are considered to be "recompeting." Programs in their first or second year of the competitively-funded grant award cycle will submit a continuation application; programs in their first or second year of a formula-funded program will follow a separate continuation application process in late winter/spring of 2012.

Existing programs must assure that all Portal-related activity, including enrollment of members and entry of service hours, is current at the time of submission. In addition, existing programs are advised that previous site visit reports, program progress reports, financial reports, online member management documentation, as well as member recruitment and retention rates will be

reviewed as part of the selection process. Systems for improving known deficiencies in any of these areas should be addressed in the program narrative.

2012-2013 AmeriCorps Grant Parameters

Funding Available. AmeriCorps*State funding comes to Indiana primarily through two separate funding streams – formula and competitive funds. The ICCSV receives formula funds from the Corporation through a population-based allocation. Competitive funds are awarded through a national competition to programs that have competed successfully at both the state and federal levels. While programs funded through the national competition are typically veteran programs, larger in size, and/or have particularly innovative program designs, first-time applicants may also be funded at the competitive level. This RFP includes both streams of funding. The ICCSV selects which applicants will be submitted to the national competition.

The ICCSV will award formula funds for 2012-2013. We will not be sure how much formula funding is available until the Corporation announces its final appropriation from Congress. This number is contingent upon future Corporation for National and Community Service state allocations.

There are 5 kinds of AmeriCorps funding opportunities available for 2012-2013 through this Request for Proposals:

1. Full-time Fixed-amount Grants (Non-EAP)

These grants are awarded to organizations operating in a single state, including single-state Professional Corps programs; and organizations that operate their AmeriCorps program in more than one state, including multi-state Professional Corps programs. Organizations in States and Territories without Commissions, and Indian Tribes may apply for a full-time fixed-amount grant. Full-time fixed-amount grants are available for programs that enroll full-time members only. Applicants apply for a fixed amount per Member Service Year, (MSY), and use their own or other resources for the remaining cost of the program. There is no match requirement for fixed-amount grants, but organizations must still raise the additional funds needed to run the program.

Full-time fixed-amount grants are only available for new and recompeting applications. Second and third-year continuation applicants with cost reimbursement grants must submit a new application if they are interested in a fixed-amount grant.

2. Operating Grants. Operating grants support fully developed plans to implement a new or existing AmeriCorps program. The instructions for the New and Recompeting Programs are contained within this Request for Proposals.

3. Three Month Development/Nine Month Operating Grants. The ICCSV recognizes that developing a high-quality AmeriCorps program takes time. New applicants may propose a three-month planning/development period, followed by nine-months of operating an AmeriCorps program for the first year of their AmeriCorps*State program. The intent of the three-month

planning/development period is to allow new programs the opportunity to develop the systems and processes necessary to operate an effective, efficient, high-quality program. Applicants selecting this model are strongly encouraged to include less than full-time members, as it would be difficult for many members to complete the required 1,700 hours in the nine-month time frame. Please note that ICCSV will not select applicants proposing this “3-9” design to compete in the competition for competitive AmeriCorps funding at the national level.

4. Education Award Program (EAP) Fixed-amount Grants. These grants are awarded to applicants that apply for a small fixed-amount grant and use their own or other resources for the majority of members’ living allowance and program costs. There is no match requirement for EAP grants. Unlike full-time fixed-amount grants, EAPs may enroll less-than-full-time members in addition to full-time members.

5. Planning Grants. Planning grants are designed to assist faith- or small, community-based organizations in their development of a strong AmeriCorps program design. The purpose of planning grants is to bring small, community-based and/or faith-based organizations to the verge of implementation so that they may compete successfully for operating assistance in the following grant cycle. In general, planning grants do not exceed \$50,000 and cover a period of 6 to 12 months. Applicants interested in applying for a planning grant should review the Instructions for Planning Grant Program Applicants section found on pages 23-25.

Grant Size Limits. *AmeriCorps grants are calculated by multiplying the number of full-time equivalent (referred to as Member Service Year (MSY)) AmeriCorps members by the cost per full-time member. For example, a successful applicant requesting 10 full-time AmeriCorps members (MSYs) at a cost per member of \$13,300 would receive a grant of \$133,000 (10 x \$13,300).*

Please note that Indiana AmeriCorps members are NOT eligible for unemployment compensation. In Indiana, the cost per MSY may not exceed \$13,300.

Table 2: Match Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Competition	Match Requirement
State Formula and Competitive, including Professional Corps	Minimum grantee share is 24% of program costs for the first three years. Overall grantee share of total program costs increases gradually beginning in Year 4 to 50% by the tenth year of funding and any year thereafter.
State and EAP Fixed-Amount Grants	There are no specific match requirements for fixed-amount grants. Grantees pay all program costs over \$800 per MSY provided by CNCS.
Professional Corps Fixed-Amount Grants	There are no specific match requirements for fixed-amount grants. Grantees pay all program costs over the \$2,000 per MSY provided by CNCS.
Full-time Fixed-Amount Grants	There are no specific match requirements for fixed-amount grants. Grantees pay all program costs over the \$13,000 per MSY provided by CNCS

Minimum Program Size. *In order to provide member positions in quantities that make an impact on the identified community need, applicants may request no fewer than 10 MSY AmeriCorps members (OFBCI highly encourages at least 15 MSY) as part of their application. Organizations are urged to partner with other organizations in your community or throughout the state to apply for AmeriCorps funding. One organization must serve as the legal applicant and fiduciary. When partnering with other organizations, you are encouraged to seek organizations that share a similar mission or focus on similar issues.*

Grant Period. Grants awarded through this selection process will support programming beginning September 1, 2012. The Corporation and the ICCSV generally provide funding for a three-year grant period, with demonstrated success toward achieving program objectives and the completion of a yearly continuation request.

Expansion Funding. *Applicants should be advised that expansion opportunities in the second and third year of a grant period are unpredictable and may be limited. Applicants should not assume they can expand program operations in the second or third year of the grant period. Existing recompeting programs that wish to expand their program should propose to do so through the application.*

Priority Areas

The Corporation for National and Community Service's mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteerism. In the FY 2012 national competition, the Corporation will give special consideration to projects that address one or a combination of six strategic initiatives, listed below, that meet critical needs of our nation, achieve national service goals, and address community problems:

1. Education
2. Healthy Futures
3. Environmental Stewardship
4. Veterans and Military Families
5. Economic Opportunity
6. Disaster Preparedness

Please visit http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/ppt_strategic_plan_8610.pdf for more information on the Corporation's strategic priorities.

The Indiana Commission on Community Service and Volunteerism will consider these priorities in making formula funding decisions, as well as other formal and informal criteria as determined by the ICCSV (including, but not limited to, proposal quality score, and geographic distribution).

Notice of Intent to Apply

Interested applicants are **REQUIRED** to submit a Notice of Intent to Apply no later than **Friday, September 30, 2011 at 5:00 P.M. (Eastern Time)**. It should be sent via email to Jeremy Gaskill, National Service Program Officer, at jgaskill@ofbci.IN.gov

The e-mail should be limited to the following information:

1. Name of the applicant organization
2. Contact information for the applicant organization
3. Geographic service area
4. Approximate number of MSY and terms of service
5. Type of grant your organization intends to submit:
 - a. New
 - b. Recompete
 - c. Education Award Program only
 - d. Planning
 - e. F.T. Fixed-Amount

Please note that submission of a “Notice of Intent to Apply” in no way binds your organization to the submission of an application. **We will only accept applications from new or recompeting applicants who have submitted the Notice of Intent to Apply by the September 30, 2011 deadline.**

Application Instructions

Applications must be submitted electronically to Jeremy Gaskill, jgaskill@ofbci.IN.gov by **Tuesday, November 1, 2011 at 5:00 P.M. (Eastern Time)**.

The AmeriCorps Regulations and Provisions should be taken into consideration. They are available at: http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/manage/index.asp.

Applicants must submit the following information in order to be considered as having a full and complete application submission:

1. Application Narrative
2. Budget Worksheet
3. Performance Measure Worksheet
4. proof of 501 © 3 status
5. Please remit a copy of the organization’s most recent audited financial statements, including an A-133 audit, if applicable. If your organization has not had a formal audit, please submit the organization’s most recent financial reports.

All items must be received by the deadline, Tuesday, November 1, 2011 at 5:00 P.M. (Eastern Time).

NOTE: Any submission that fails to meet all application requirements will not be reviewed.

Selection Process and Criteria

The OFBCI will post Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to the OFBCI website to assure that all applicants have access to the same technical assistance. Please email questions to:

jgaskill@ofbci.in.gov.

The review and selection of Indiana's AmeriCorps applications is a multiple-step process as described below:

August 5	AmeriCorps Public Interest Sessions Announced
August 17 – September 01	Public Interest Sessions <i>Evansville (August 17), (New Albany (August 18), Merrillville (August 24), South Bend (August 25), Ft. Wayne (August 26), Indianapolis (August 31), and Kokomo (September 1)</i>
September 9	2012-2013 Indiana AmeriCorps Request for Proposals released
September 30	Notice of Intent to Apply due via e-mail by 5:00 P.M. (Eastern Time)
November 01	New and Recompete final applications due to the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives by 5:00 P.M. (Eastern Time).
November 18	External Peer Review Panel Convenes
November 21	Internal Staff Review Panel Convenes
December 08	The ICCSV reviews all submissions; makes recommendations for funding.
December 12	Notice to Applicants of Preliminary Funding Decisions/Requests for Clarifications and/or Revisions
December 14 - 22	Pre-Award Risk Assessments of New Competitive Applicants
December 16	Technical Training for New and Recompete Competitive Applicants
January 18 (2012)	Deadline for OFBCI to submit revised competitive grant applications in eGrants for Competitive consideration

February 21 (2012)	Technical Training for New and Recompete Formula Applicants
March – April (2012)	Pre-Award Risk Assessments of New Formula Applicants
May 31 (2012)	Scheduled CNCS Notification of Competitive Funding Decisions
June 18 (2012)	OFBCI Notice of Formula Funding Decisions
June (2012)	Final Revisions (if applicable) due to OFBCI for formula applications

This timeline is subject to change.

Please note that funding for this grant is contingent on appropriation of funding from the CNCS.

Applicants that are selected to compete in the national competitive process will be forwarded to the CNCS after making any revisions requested by the ICCSV.

The Corporation will make funding decisions following the completion of their review process. The ICCSV will finalize its program selections following the Corporation's announcements.

Selection Criteria

Staff and Peer Review. Commission staff will review applications for completeness. **Incomplete applications will not be scored.** Complete applications will be reviewed concurrently by both an internal staff review panel and an external panel of peer reviewers. Both panels will score and rank each application.

Review criteria. In evaluating your application for funding, reviewers will assess your program design, organizational capability, and the program's cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy. The weights assigned to each category can be found in the [2012 Notification of Funding Availability \(NOFA\)](#). Reviewers will assess application narratives against these criteria and weight them accordingly. Please see the AmeriCorps Regulations, [45 CFR §§ 2522.420–2522.448](#), for additional details regarding these criteria and what reviewers will assess in each category.

Even though participants on these panels are familiar with national service, do not assume that they are familiar with your grant program, even if you are recompeting. Please provide sufficient information in your application to make your program clear to a reviewer who is unfamiliar with your program.